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C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

The Nature and Function of Conscience in Personality

Constance Burrows

Moral Development in Judaism

John Spanjer Buus

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The Popular Religion of the Hebrews from the Nomadic Period to the Babylonian Exile

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The Nature and Function of Conscience in Personality

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THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF CONSCIENCE IN PERSONALITY

When I was a child I was fascinated by one special chart in an old encyclopaedia--a series of profile pictures of the human head fastened together at one side so that each fitted exactly over the top of the other. The first in the series pictured the bones and veins and arteries, the next the muscles and nerves, the next a cross section of the head, and the last a phrenologist's chart of the most elaborate nature. I found it interesting to look at the bones, the muscles and nerves, and to examine the cross section, but my attention was held as if through enchantment by the picture that lay in back of them all where a multitude of personality potentialities were charted out with all the detail and apparent precision of a topographical map. I discovered destructiveness located with the other so-called "Animal" characteristics just slightly above the ears; conscientiousness along with self-esteem, firmness, cautiousness, and sublimity was classified in a group called "Aspiring". Other groups of characteristics: "Domestic", "Perceptives", "Self-Protecting", "Reflectives", and "Moral" were also given a place after some mysterious and scarcely to be detected plan.

It was intriguing to examine the location and meditatingly attempt to determine the extensity and consequent intensity of a particular characteristic within one's self. Intriguing to be sure, but scarcely profitable! Hardly more worth-while,

however, were the analyses of those who claimed to have a thorough knowledge of, and scientific insight into the whole system. A child's fanciful guesswork was just about as productive of useful accuracy as were the more complex and profound diagnoses. So it was that even before that encyclopaedia came into my hands, the theories which underlay my gorgeously colored, and intricately detailed map had been thoroughly discountenanced. For phrenology owed its impetus to Faculty Psychology, and the reputation of "mental faculties" has fallen upon evil days. Locke was one of the first to bring to light the absurdities involved when this conception that the mind was divided into little sections functioning as individual units was carried to its legitimate conclusion. In the Essay on Human Understanding he wrote, "We may as properly say that the singing faculty sings, and the dancing faculty dances, as that the will chooses, or that understanding conceives; or as is usual that the will directs the understanding or the understanding obeys, or obeys not the will; it being as proper and intelligible to say that the power of speaking directs the power of singing, or the power of singing obeys, or disobeys, the power of speaking."[1]

Since the time of Locke, other philosophers and psychologists have brought such searching criticism to play upon the theory that the whole system with all its ramifications has been cast irretrievably into the discard. Modern psychology knows nothing of "mental faculties"; physiologists assert

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1. Locke, John. Essay on Human Understanding.

that the nervous system does not work in any such piecemeal fashion; there is much doubt in regard to any one phase of mental life possessing energy or power in and of itself; and finally, the extent and nature of intellect, character, and temperament traits are not to be discovered by methods as grossly quantitative as this. Mental abilities function in a way more dependent upon qualitative differentiation than upon the sheer weight and size of the brain.[2]

The gradual elimination of this way of thinking of the mind had exceedingly more far reaching effects than to make my phrenologist's chart an amusing relic of an outworn hypothesis. Other notions were added to the discard heap. For example, man no longer had a memory--true, he remembered, but he had no memory; nor had he a will, conscience, imagination, reason, or any other special faculty. As time progressed, it seems as it those who were discarding became a little frenzied in raising the total score of things that man had not. It came at last to the place where a few thinkers had given up everything, but consciousness, and had gone to the extent of pondering deeply over the problem, "Does consciousness exist?"

However, the extreme results of the overthrow of faculty psychology need not concern us, for all this reconnoitering has been but for the purpose of bringing into view and partially explaining the fact that the term "conscience" has fallen into disuse and even disrepute. The faith of our

2. Griffith,C.R. General Introduction to Psychology. 478,479.

fathers, the moral convictions by which they lived were based upon the firm belief in a special faculty of moral intuition, a moral sense or instinct. With the breakdown of faculty psychology, conscience could no longer be considered as a faculty and the doubt has grown as to whether there was anything in personality that corresponded to that which for years and years of thought has been designated by the term conscience. The word has become unfashionable.

The modern tendency is to ignore the possibility of a conscience, and, as Ralph W. Sockman has written in The Morals of Tomorrow, to disregard and scorn the old-fashioned agonizing over sin. The many caricatures of the Puritan, both early and late varieties, is symptomatic of the trend, because the Puritan is the type of person we think of as building his whole life and being around the traditional concept of conscience. He has become the most lampooned figure in history. In the wet newspapers, "from the gaunt stove-pipe hat to the stealthy gum shoes it is a masterpiece of suggestive caricature. The cunning shifty eyes, and eager frosty nose, the lean and shaven jowl; the scrawny and sanctimonious cravat, the chapped wrists, and bony prehensile fingers; the lugubrious umbrella and the dismal coat--how vivid and merciless the lampoon! Intolerance, illiberalism, mean-spirited instincts of spying and snooping; craftiness, stupidity, cruelty, hypocrisy--all are seared in clarity of outline."[3]

3. Luccock, H.E. Jesus and the American Mind. 63

In current fiction he appears as unpleasantly repressed, desiring but not daring, in contrast to the free, passion tasting, wide experiencing heroes and heroines. A sort of sentimentalism in morality has developed,for the writers are not content until the bad act is acclaimed as good. It is not enough that the dregs of life must be drunk, the mires waded in, but we must be persuaded that it is good to do thus in order that life, by indulging in such manifold experience, may achieve its full expression. If such heroic spirits run too far amuck for even their libertarian creators, it is more popular to dilute the individual responsibility, and place the blame for wrong doing upon the shoulders of society. It is more popular, and an easier solution too, because it is more difficult to do anything about it. "The shortcomings of society serve for the individual as an alibi rather than a challenge for, 'What is everybody's business is nobody's business.' "[4]

Another reason why the term "conscience" has fallen into disrepute is because of the breakdown of external authority. Conscience was a usuable conception when it was common sense that there were certain infallible guides for conduct like the Bible, or the wisdom of parents. Conscience existed as a divine measuring stick within the person to indicate whether or not he was living up to these absolute norms of conduct. Like the golden goose of the fairy tale who if things progressed well was silent but if the usual course of events was

4. Sockman, Ralph W. The Morals of Tomorrow. 31

broken began a terrific clamour--so with conscience, nothing is known of it until a sin is committed and then a distinct inner crying aloud, a feeling of discomfort, or of real pain is simultaneously experienced. However, when there came to be a general scepticism as to the existence of any absolute authority for conduct, the utility of a measuring stick in a world without final standards became very questionable.

As a consequence, the present status of affairs brings to focus certain problems:--Just what is conscience? What has been meant by? What may be meant? What is its function in individual personality? What is its effect upon the relationship of personalities?

II

Conscience in Theory

It is always a mistake to ignore previous solutions of a problem for in doing so the paths leading into certain cul-de-sacs are worn even deeper, and the proved errors of the past receive an endless repetition. Therefore, it is well to make a survey of the conceptions that have been held of conscience. The past has held many theories as to its nature and function, and some of them cannot but be of great value in ferreting out the truth.

For the sake of convenience the theories may all be tentatively classified in two ways: 1st on the basis of the belief held as to the origin of conscience, and 2nd on the basis of the specific mental function which is emphasized.

1. The classification on the basis of origin is divided into (A) those theories which regard conscience as a relatively simple entity, a special innate moral sense or intuition, and (B) those theories which regard conscience as a product of evolution developed in the individual through social culture contacts, a complex organization or consolidation of elements found in all consciousness.

(A) Chronologically, (A), or the intuitionest theory as it is sometimes called is the oldest of the two. Socrates and Plato were the earliest thinkers to take up the problem of ethics in a specifically scientific-philosophical manner, and the nature of conscience in at least a quasi-philosophical

fashion. In the "Apology," Socrates makes a powerful defense of his previous course of action, before his accusers, and points out that he has been but following the divine inner guidance, "Some of you may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the State. I will tell you why. You have heard me speak at sundry times and in divers places of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Miletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign, which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids, but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do. This is what deters me from being a politician. And rightly, as I think."[5]

Conscience, for Socrates and Plato, was a bit of the divine incorporated within men, "the director of man's spiritual nature," the voice of God. It was present at birth, but its message remained undetected until the self developed consciousness qualitatively acute enough to recognize its voice. In other words, for them conscience was considered to be quite as much a part of man's innate equipment as the organ of sight or hearing.

A long list of names might be added to those of Socrates and Plato for this theory in addition to being the oldest has had the greatest number of adherents. Of them, Kant is un-

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5. Apology, Section 31

doubtedly the most outstanding.

(B) In contrast to the intuition theory of conscience, those theories which regard conscience as a product of evolution developed in the individual through social culture contacts have had a shorter history, and until relatively recent times have drawn few followers. At the present time, however, they are much in vogue and to a degree responsible for a certain variety of scepticism in ethics.

The general theory owes its impetus to the contributions of Darwin and Spencer to the doctrine of evolution. In 1868 Spencer wrote explaining his views on the moral sense, "I believe that the experiences of utility organized and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding modifications, which by continued transmission and accumulation, have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition--certain emotions responding to right and wrong conduct, which have no apparent basis in the individual experiences of utility."

A similar concept was anticipated by Darwin in the section on the "Moral Sense" in the "Descent of Man." Suscribing to the judgment of writers who maintain that of all the differences between man and the lower animals, the moral sense or conscience is the most important, he yet goes on to advance the notion that any animal endowed with well-marked social instincts would inevitably acquire a moral sense or conscience as soon as its intellectual powers had become as well or nearly as well developed as in man. The evidence which leads him

to this notion is summed up thus, "Firstly, the social instincts lead an animal to take pleasure in the society of his fellows, and to feel a certain amount of sympathy with them, and to perform various services for them. The services may be of a definite and evidently instinctive nature; or there may be only a wish and readiness, as with most of the higher social animals, to aid their fellows in certain general ways. But these feelings and services are by no means extended to all the individuals of the same species, only to those of the same association. Secondly, as soon as the mental faculties had become highly developed, images of all past actions and motives would be incessantly passing through the brain of each individual; and that feeling of dissatisfaction, or even misery, which invariably results, as we shall hereafter see, from any unsatisfied instinct, would arise, as often as it was perceived that the enduring and always present social instinct had yielded to some other instinct, at the time stronger, but neither enduring in its nature, nor leaving behind it a very vivid impression. It is clear that many instinctive desires, such as that of hunger, are in their nature of short duration; and after being satisfied, are not readily or vividly recalled. Thirdly, after the power of language had been acquired, and the wishes of the community could be expressed, the common opinion how each member ought to act for the public good, would naturally become in a paramount degree the guide to action. But it should be borne in mind that however great weight we may at-

tribute to public opinion, our regard for the approbation and disapprobation of our fellows depends on sympathy, which as we shall see, forms an essential part of the social instinct, and is indeed its foundation stone. Lastly, habit in the individual would ultimately play a very important part in guiding the conduct of each member; for the social instinct, together with sympathy, is, like any other instinct, greatly strengthened by habit, and so consequently would be obedience to the wishes and the judgment of the community."[7]

The aspects of the animal which Darwin regards as social instincts are a certain gregariousness, parental and filial affection et cetera, which are certainly to be found in other animals beside man. On these instincts so-called, depends the development of morality and the moral sense. It is doubtful whether any less than the human animal could be included under the section quoted above which Darwin introduces by "Secondly." Yet the lower social animals with their retinue of social instincts have reached an embryonic moral stage, and the moment in the evolution of life when intelligence developed to the proper degree, the regulation of life became a conscious and self-conscious process guided by socio-moral criteria. The social instincts with their accompanying sentiment expressions of love and sympathy and the reason which judges activity by the socio-moral criteria graudally achieved a more or less firm and enduring integration or organization and that is

7. Darwin, Charles. The Descent of Man. 97, 98

what we know as conscience.

Darwin believed there wasnothing far-fetched or illogical in the idea that conscience has evolved and persisted in this way through the strengthening and consequent organization of the social instincts, for he writes, "We can perceive that an instinctive impulse, if it be in any way more beneficial to a species than some other or opposed instinct, would be rendered the more potent of the two through natural selection; for the individuals who had it most strongly developed would survive in larger numbers."[8] This accounts for the continued existence and growing strength of the social instinct in the purely animal realm, and in the human realm it is even more obvious. No unit of society could be assured of any permanency if anti-social acts like murder, robbery, and treachery were common within it, consequently the group whose attitude toward such acts is most prohibitory is the group who, other factors being equal, is apt to be strongest, and to survive in the greatest numbers thus increasing the proportions of its unique characteristic generation by generation until it becomes a universal property. "Selfish and contentious people will not cohere and without coherence nothing can be effected. A tribe rich in the above qualities would spread and be victorious over other tribes."[9]

But a more fundamental question might be raised, How did a large number of members within the limits of the same

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8. Darwin, Charles, The Descent of Man. 108
9. Ibid, 130

tribe first become endowed with these social and moral qualities? In answer, Darwin traces some of the probable steps. In the first place, as man's power of reasoning and seeing into the future advance he would begin to recognize that giving assistance to his fellows ordinarily led to their responding by helping him. Continued conduct modified by this concept might give him the habit of acting benevolently toward his fellows. Such action tends to strengthen the feeling of sympathy which may have aroused the first act of this sort; and habits carried on through successive generations probably become hereditary.

In addition, man must have been very early influenced by praise and blame since even dogs seem to be responsive to it, and it would be natural for the group to approve of conduct which is for the general good and condemn all else. Therefore since doing good unto others is the foundation stone of morality this susceptibility to praise and blame possessed great potency in the development of morality.

Finally, "with increased experience and reason, man perceives the more remote consequences of his actions, and the self-regarding virtues, such as temperance, chastity, et cetera, which during early times are.....utterly disregarded, come to be highly esteemed or even held sacred....Ultimately, our moral sense or conscience becomes a highly complex sentiment--originating in the social instincts, largely guided by the approbation of our fellow men, ruled by reason,

self-interest, and in later times by deep religious feelings, and conformed to by instruction and habit....At all times throughout the world tribes have supplanted other tribes; and as morality is one important element in their success, the standard of morality and the number of well endowed men will thus everywhere tend to rise and increase."[10]

This is substantially the evolutionary theory of the origin and nature of conscience. Modern advocates of the theory have been somewhat wary of being as concrete and definite as Darwin's enthusiasm led him to be, yet their general conclusions are essentially the same. Conscience is the successor to custom in the regulation of conduct--an evolving product of natural selection. The brunt of the attack on the theory came from those who believed that to explain the origin of conscience in this fashion was to destroy the validity of its function. This is the old fatal fallacy of thinking that the value of a thing is in some way inextricably connected with, and dependent upon its origin. But as James H. Hyslop writes in the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,"We do not make any other scientific truth depend on the cause of its origin, but upon its conformity to facts and the law of things. It must be the same with the dictates of conscience. They are valid or invalid irrespective of the mode of their origin and because of their relation to the welfare of the individual."[11]

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10. Darwin, Charles. The Descent of Man. 132
11. Hyslop, James H. "Conscience." Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Vol. IV. 33

2. The second classification listed above naturally overlaps the first, but it brings to focus certain problems with which the former is not concerned. Its divisions are based upon the specific mental function which is emphasized e.g. the function of reason in conscience, the function of will, et cetera.

(A) The emphasis on the function of reason in conscience has had notable modern exponents in Bishop Butler, and Hastings Rashdall, but had already received its unique and unequalled expression in the philosophy of Socrates and Plato. Their particular emphasis no doubt owed its origin to the principle which colored their whole ehical theory, the earnest conviction that virtue and knowledge were to be identified. Xenophon writes of Socrates in this regard, "Between Wisdom and Prudence he drew no distinction; but if a man knows and practices what is beautiful and good, knows and avoids what is base, that man he judged to be both wise and prudent. When asked further whether he thought that those who know what they ought to do and yet do the opposite are at once wise and vicious, he answered: 'No; not so much that, as both unwise and vicious. For I think that all men have a choice between various courses, and choose and follow the one which they think conduces most to their advantage. Therefore, I hold that those who follow the wrong course are neither wise nor prudent.'

"He said that Justice and every other form of Virtue is Wisdom. 'For just actions and all forms of virtuous act-

ivity are beautiful and good. He who knows the beautiful and good will never choose anything else, he who is ignorant of them cannot do them, and even if he tries will fail. Hence the wise do what is beautiful and good and the unwise cannot and fail if they try. Therefore since just actions and all forms of beautiful and good activity are virtuous actions, it is clear that Justice and every form of Virtue is Wisdom.' "[12]

The dialogues, Euthyphro, Laches, and Charmides are developed to show that in the final statement of the case any of the single virtues may be reduced to the fundamental virtue of knowledge. In the Euthyphro, the young man Euthyphro is prosecuting his father for the unintentional killing of a slave who had murdered, and he is convinced with overwhelming self-confidence of the righteousness of this act. With his inimitable dialectical skill, Socrates soon brings to light that Euthyphro cannot even tell what piety is. His action is being guided by an attempt to follow the stereotyped letter of the law rather than to get behind the letter to the ultimate meaning and purpose for which laws were made--goodness and justice. If he had had knowledge instead of unfounded self-confidence he would have acted in a true moral fashion instead of committing this atrocity. He was guilty of this evil because he was guilty of the greatest evil, ignorance. Xenophon expresses the thought of Socrates at this point thus: "The greatest evil to men generally, is one which is innate

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12. Xenophon, III. 9, 4

in their souls and which a man is always excusing in himself and so has no way of escaping. I mean what is expressed in the saying that every man is and ought to be dear to himself... From thissame fault arises the common habit of regarding our ignorance as wisdom and of thinking we know all things when, so to speak, we really know nothing."[13]

The Laches is concerned with the problem, "What is Courage?" After much discussion and the proposal of many definitions, the conclusion is reached that courage is the knowledge of things terrible, and Socrates takes definite control of the direction of the argument from then on, "Courage has been defined to be intelligence of knowledge of the terrible; and courage is not all virtue, but only one of the virtues. The terrible is in the future, and therefore the knowledge of the terrible is the knowledge of the future. But there can be no knowledge of future good or evil separated from the knowledge of the good or evil of the past or present; that is to say, of all good and evil. Courage, therefore, is the knowledge of good and evil generally. But he who has knowledge of good and evil generally, must not only have courage, but also, temperance, justice, and every other virtue. Thus a single virtue would be the same as every other virtue."[14]

The nature of Temperance is sought in the Charmides, and in this search two answers are finally achieved: 1. Temperance is self-knowledge, or 2. Temperance is the knowledge of what

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13. Laws. 731d
14. Jowett, Benjamin, Plato, Vol. I. 69

he does not know. Neither of the definitions completely satisfies the partakers in the quest, yet we can see that once more the emphasis is thrown back upon knowledge as the source of virtue.

Knowledge is fundamental to virtue, and knowledge of self is fundamental to all other knowledge. It is thus clear why Plato has Socrates say in the Phaedrus, "....I am a lover of knowledge, and the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, not the trees or the country."[15] "Know thyself" is the first and greatest command for him who would be a philosopher--a lover of wisdom; in fact, self-knowledge is philosophy. When this knowledge of the self is achieved the self is recognized as an entity having a law, and interests of its own. Everything has a function of which it is the sole, or best, instrument. In addition, it is through their particular virtue that things perform their proper functions well. Now the function of the soul is life and its virtue, justice. Sin is consequently a disease of the soul, because it hinders or destroys the soul's virtue, the weakness or absence of which divitalizes and makes inconsequential the function or raison d'etre of the soul. The just man, it is stated in Book II. of the Republic, may be stripped bare of everything but justice. Without being guilty of one unjust act, he may have the worse reputation for injustice. He may be scourged, racked, fettered, have his eyes burnt out,and at last after suffering every kind of

15. Phaedrus, Section 230

torture may be crucified. Nevertheless he is still better off accompanied by all the punishments of sin than he who has committed an injustice even though he be accompanied by all the rewards of virtue. The same principle is couched in different words in the Gorgias--It is worse to be guilty of an injustice than to suffer one.

The laws and interests of the self are separate and above the life of the body. They are moral and spiritual in character, and it is only in using the body and directing the soul in accord with them that righteousness, the rightful end of the self is realized. Justice, or righteousness, or complete morality, is a sufficient reward in itself because it is the health, balance, or virtue of the soul, and when it is won necessarily brings happiness since it means that the soul has perfectly achieved its reason for being.

Though the emphasis upon reason in the moral theory of Socrates and Plato is uniformily weighty, there is no explicit identification of it with conscience. Yet the implications seem very clear--reason is the regulative determinant in the moral life of man, and what is that but conscience? Socrates' reference to his daemon is a reference to the divine nature of this reason. It is one expression of the conviction held by both Socrates and Plato of the superiority of moral law over individual caprice, and that if the authority of conscience seems to vary it is only in appearance.[16]

16. Weber, Alfred, and Perry, R.B. History of Philosophy, 49

(B) In spite of the prestige attached, those who hold absolute faith in the supremacy of reason were in time destined for disillusionment. It is customary to think of the philosophies of Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche as being instrumental in this process, for it is in their thought that we find Will rather than Reason being given the final authority. Yet, however wide the later divergence of theory, they derived their initial inspiration from the philosophy of Kant and it is his conception of will which is fundamental and of most significance to us because of its vital connection with ethical theory in general and the theory of conscience in particular.

Kant called his age an age of criticism and set about to carefully examine and investigate beliefs which had been dogmaticaly assumed and held to with an unjustified equanimity up to his time. His emphasis upon will is often overlooked because of his terminology. Reason is made fundamental, but it covers more than is ordinarily meant by the term. It is a general term in the Kantian sense and is likened to "a queen, who, under three different names, governs three separate states each having its own laws, customs, and tendencies. In the theoretical sphere, it manifests itself as the faculty of knowing, or the sense of truth; in the aesthetical sphere, as the sense of beauty and teleological fitness; in the practical sphere, as the active faculty, or the sense of goodness."[17]

17. Weber, Alfred, and Perry, R.B. History of Philosophy. 354

What is popularly meant by reason is the reason of the theoretical sphere and is treated in the "Critique of Pure Reason." If this discussion had ended the philosophy of Kant, we would be compelled to classify him as a sceptic, for he clearly demonstrates that this phase of reason can only know the phenomenal world and is hopelessly involved in antinomies and doubts, and is by its very nature denied the possibility of ever proving the reality of the things-in-itself, the soul, freedom, or God; but Kant does not stop at this point, he moves on to the "Critique of Practical Reason." Reason is here shown to be subordinate to the Practical Reason, or what is ordinarily meant by the will. Will is constitutive, and creative while reason is only regulative and modifying, consequently it is the will and not reason which forms the basis of our faculties.[18]

The supremacy of the will is the leading thought of the Kantian philosophy and the key to the interpretation of his theory of ethics. To the will a certain metaphysical capacity is conceded, for as reason is concerned with, and limited to, the phenomenal realm, the will is concerned with the realm of ultimate realities. This realm is the sphere or morality, and, with quite as much right as certain principles of physical law are required by theoretical reason, it requires certain postulates. These demands are called the Postulates of Morality, and are according to Kant's view: belief in freedom of the will, immortality, and the existence

18. Weber, Alfred, and Perry, R.B. History of Philosophy. 376

of God. In this fashion, Kant avoids the barreness of scepticism, and prepares for the establishment of the very principles which from the point of view of Pure Reason he was forced to deny any knowledge of. Theoretical reason is confined to the phenomenal world and cannot hope to contribute to, or discountenance these Postulates of Morality which belong to the realm of noumena, a realm unapproachable except through the channels of faith. Will, as the ally of rational faith, is the source and natural guardian of moral and religious beliefs.

We do not, however, appreciate the full implications of the Kantian ethical theory until we take recognition of this sentence from his argument, "Conscience is practical reason, holding before man his duty in every case of law, so as either to acquit or condemn him." We must realize that he identifies this practical reason, this rationality with volitional power; ~~this will~~; this will, with conscience.

Nothing can be conceived of in this world which is unconditionally good except a good will. The will is good to the extent that it reveres the moral law, and loyalty to the moral law is a sort of universal justice. Morality demands that we maintain a strict impartiality in our judgment and evaluations of others, for persons are always to be considered as ends in themselves because the person is the bearer of moral reason and moral law--the only unqualified good. Kant enumerates three propositions for determining the accord of the will with the law.

The first test of the moral worth of an action is that it must be done from duty. This rules out all actions which may conform to duty but are in reality impelled by some other inclination. For example, in the words of Kant, "It is always a matter of duty that a dealer should not overcharge an inexperienced purchaser; and wherever there is much commerce, the prudent tradesman does not overcharge, but keeps a fixed price for everyone,so that a child buys of him as well as any other. Men are thus honestly served; but this is not enough to make us believe that the tradesman had so acted from duty and from principles of honesty; his own advantage required it; it is out of the question in this case to suppose that he might have besides a direct inclination in favour of the buyers, so that, as it were, from love he should give no advantage to one over another. Accordingly the action was done neither from duty nor from direct inclination, but merely with a selfish view.

"On the other hand, it is a duty to maintain one's life; and, in addition, everyone has also a direct inclination to do so. But on thisaccount the often anxious care which most men take for it has no intrinsic worth, and the maxim has no moral import. They preserve their life as duty requires, no doubt, but not because duty requires. On the other hand, if adversity and hopeless sorrow have completely taken away the relish for life; if the unfortunate one, strong in mind, indignant at his fate rather than desponding or dejected. wishes for death and yet preserves his life without loving it--not

from inclination or fear, but from duty--then his maxim has a moral worth."[19]

The second test is "that an action done from duty derives its moral worth, not from the purpose which is to be attained by it, but from the maxim by which it is determined, and therefore does not depend on the realization of the object of action, but merely on the principle of volition by which the action has been determined. It is therefore clear from what precedes that the purposes which we may have in view in our action, or their effects regarded as ends and springs of the will, cannot give to actions any unconditional or moral worth." It does not make any difference what the character or success of the act is, just so the motive which underlies it is governed by the pure a priori principle of duty from which every material principle has been withdrawn.

The third test is a consequence of the first two and is that: "Duty is the necessity of acting from the respect for the law."[20] Respect for law is a conception of worth which thwarts self-love, for it takes all persons into consideration. "Respect for a person is properly only respect for the law (of honesty etc.) of which he gives us an example. Since we also look on the improvement of our talents as a duty, we consider that we see in a person of talents, as it were, the example of a law (viz. to become like him in this by exercise), and this constitutes our respect."[21]

19. Kant. Selections. (The Modern Student's Library--Philosophy Series) 275
20. Kant. Selections, 279
21. Ibid, 289

This conformity to law which duty requires is conformity to law in general which is expressed by the maxim: I am never to act otherwise than so that I could also will that my maxim should become a universal law. This principle is sufficient to guide the will in its practical judgments. For example if one were faced with the problem whether it was justifiable when in distress to make a promise with no intention to keep it; no satisfactory solution can be reached until this general maxim is applied. In a time of trouble it might be in accord with a person's whole future welfare to borrow money even though he knew it would be impossible to ever repay it. It might be the prudent thing to do, but when this bit of self-love is translated into the form of a universal law--"Everyone may make a deceitful promise when he finds himself in a difficulty from which he cannot otherwise extricate himself," then there comes an awareness that while one can will to tell a lie he can by no means will that lying should be a universal law. For with such a law there would be no promises at all, since it would be in vain to allege intentions in regard to future actions after once breaking such allegations. Hence the maxim, as soon as it becomes a universal law, would necessarily destroy itself.[22]

Respect for law, then, is the only undoubted moral motive, and the moral law is for the will of every rational being a law of duty. The voice of duty comes as what Kant calls the

22. Kant. Selections, 282

categorical imperative. Imperatives are the formulae which express the relation of objective laws of all volition to the subjective imperfection of the will of the individual rational being. All imperatives command either hypothetically or categorically. If the action is good only as a means to something else, then the imperative is hypothetical. But an action which is necessary of itself without any reference to another end is the working of the categorical imperative. This is the nature of duty, it commands unconditionally with no possibility of an "if," and the will which is good is obedient to the command of its inner voice.

For Kant, as has been shown, this will is the practical reason, and the practical reason is conscience "holding before a man his duty in every case of law, so as either to acquit or condemn him. Its reference therefore, is not to an object, but merely to the subject (so as to affect the moral feeling by its action)....It follows that to speak of an erring conscience if nonsense; for although I may sometimes be mistaken in the objective judgment whether something is duty or not, I cannot err in the subjective judgment whether I have compared it with my practical judgment at all, and then there would be neither error or truth ...."The consciousness of an inner tribunal in man (before which 'his thoughts accuse or else excuse one another') is CONSCIENCE. Every man has conscience, and finds himself observed by an inward judge, threatened and kept in awe (respect combined with fear), and this power in him which watches over the laws is not something that he voluntarily makes for himself, but incorporated in his very nature. It follows

him like his shadow when he tries to escape it. He may deafen himself or lull himself to slumber by pleasures and distractions, but he cannot help now and then coming to himself on awaking, and then at once he hears its awful voice. In his extremest depravity he may cease to regard it, but he cannot help hearing it.

"The original intellectual andmoral attribute called conscience has this peculiarity, that although this transaction is a transaction of man with himself, yet he finds himself compelled by his reason to carry it on as though at the command of another person. For the business here is the carrying on of a suit (causa)before a court. Now that he who is the accused by his conscience should be conceived as one and the same person with the judge, is an absurd representation of a tribunal; for in such a case the complainant would always lose his suit. Conscience, therefore, if it would escape self-contradiction, must in all duties conceive some other than himself as the judge of his actions. This other may be an actual or only an ideal person which Reason frames to itself. Such an ideal person (the authorized judge in the Court of Conscience) must be one who knows the heart; for the court is set up in the inward part of man. He must also have all power to oblige--that is, must be, or be conceived to be, a person in relation to whom all duties are to be viewed as his commands; since conscience is the internal judge of all free actions. Such a moral being must also possess all power (in heaven and on earth), since otherwise he could not give his laws

the full effect that belongs to them, which is a necessary part of the office of judge. A moral being such as this, possessed of absolute power, is God; hence Conscience must be conceived as a subjective principle which declares our responsibility to God for actions; may, this latter conception (responsibility) will be always contained (however obscurely) in that moral self-consciousness."[23]

The fact of conscience cannot be escaped. The recognition of the feeling of ought is just as certain as the cogito ergo sum of Descartes. It is the point in experience at which reality is touched, for it is the symbol or proof that something lies beyond the world of nature since it enables man to govern his impulses, instincts, and desires and aversions, which are the appearances of nature within him. Furthermore, it is the guarantee of the three moral postulates: First, there is no rationality in the recognition of "ought" unless man is free to follow out its dictates and rule nature. Second, the moral law requires nothing short of perfection of the will. This cannot be achieved until the inclinations are absolutely in accord with duty. Though duty can never be changed, inclination must be. However, this would take an infinite amount of time and only immortality would provide that.[24] In the third place, "If conscience is rooted in reality, and not in illusion, then reality must be a moral order: and it must therefore

23. Abbott, T.K. Kant's Critique of Practical Reason, 290, 291
24. Hocking, W.E. Types of Philosophy, 148, 149

bring about an agreement between morality and happiness. But the only power capable of doing this would be a power controlling the whole course of experience in this world and the next. That power is what men call God....The moral will thus establishes what the intellect leaves in doubt."[25]

(C) To complete what appears to be the following out of the old tripartite division of the mind, it seems as if theories of conscience emphasizing the function of the emotions should have been presented. Some years ago, Hastings Rashdall produced a small volume entitled, "Is Conscience an Emotion?", which attacked all ethical theorists who attempted to make conscience wholly dependent upon feeling. However, upon investigation, the offensive seems to have been largely taken up against opponents so nebulous as to be practically non-existent. William McDougall and Dr. Westermarck are the only two real figures named as representatives of this so-called school of ethical thought, and Dr. McDougall takes considerable trouble in an article in the Hibbert Journal to defend his thought against this classification. He says pointblank, "No serious person contends that Conscience is an emotion or denies that Reason has played a great part in the building and refining of the moral tradition and the moral character of persons."[26]

In the "Outline of Psychology" where he is discussing this unknown X that Shaftsbury calls "good taste", Bishop Butler "conscience", and James the "fiat of the Will", he

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25. Hocking, W.E. Types of Philosophy, 148, 149
26. MacDougall, Wm. Is Conscience an Emotion? Hibbert Journal Vol. XIX, 284

writes, "The X, the unknown quantity of which we are always in search, is always an impulse awakened within the sentiment of self-regard. It is the desire that I, the precious self, that being which I conceive of proudly or humbly, more or less adequately, more or less truly, more or less clearly, according to the degree of development of my powers, the desire that this self shall realize in action the ideal of conduct which it has formulated and accepted."[27] The emotions as organized in the sentiment of self-regard are given due appreciation, but there is not the slightest hint that they furnish the whole story of that which we call conscience. The X is always an impulse which implies will, and is guided by the ideal of conduct which has been formulated and accepted.[27]

Our second classification must therefore remain apparently incomplete. The upholders of an emotional theory of conscience are mythical. It is true that the evolutionary theory does tend to throw the weight of emphasis upon the emotional and possibly instinctive phases of life, and, whenever this occurs, of course, it is a preliminary to a subjectivity and consequent scepticism in ethics such as has been described above; yet, even in this theory the place of reason, judgment, impulse and volition is not ignored to the extent that Dr. Rashdall would lead us to infer.

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27. MacDougall, Wm. Outline of Psychology. 440,441

III.

An Evaluation of the Theories of Conscience

After such a fashion have the moral theorists, the ethicists, described the nature and function of conscience. Yet, a survey of these theories brings considerable doubt as to the complete validity of any individual theory. The strong impression is gained that each is viewing the problem from an angle which puts one aspect into clear focus and leaves the rest in obscurity--dull and negative obscurity. In other words, each of the conceptions which has been described has the common fault of emphasizing one aspect of personality to such an extent that the whole is neglected, and this results in a confusing distortion of the problem. In addition to this common fault, each theory has particular faults of its own.

To make the criticism more specific it will perhaps be necessary to consider again the theories which have been presented.

The Intuitionist Theory

In the first place the intuitionist theory failed most abyssmally, because it rested upon the presuppositions of faculty psychology. Without that as a basis it has come to be generally regarded as an interesting myth, a pleasant and agreeable idea, but just not corresponding to the facts. It may also be condemned because it rules out to a large degree, if not absolutely, the principle of development and progress, and minimizes the place of personal effort

in the growth and work of conscience. Conscience, in this theory, is a perfect instrument placed full grown in the person and operated by God. Man's relation to it is a somewhat passive one--he has but to listen to its dictates and carry them out. Yet, in our everyday experience, and in what we may deduce from the records of history, the nature and function of conscience would seem to require a little more intricate explanation than this. Such simplicity is altogether too parsimonious for a thoroughgoing solution. Again, it may be criticized on the basis which MacDougall points out," For those who accept this theory can always find a justification for any line of action on which they are strongly set; asserting that their conscience approves or impels to that course, they refuse to entertain alternative, condemning perhaps as sophistry or casuistry any and every process of critical self-examination."[28]

The Evolutionary Theory

This theory makes at least a partial advance over the previous one in that it gives full recognition to the principle of development, and certainly we have sufficient evidence to say with all surety that conscience has developed. One of the most penetrating writers in the field of Christian ethics, Toyohiko Kagawa, writes in this regard, "Today evolution stands, and the assurance that it will stand rests on the recognition of evolution deep within the ego. The ego is the treasure vault of evolution. Further

28. MacDougall, William. Character and Conduct of Life. 82

evolution and change depend largely upon the individual's fresh determinations. If evolution continues the ego ought to become better; and the man who cannot believe that he is growing better is not qualified to believe in evolution. That is, conscience is the continuation of evolution. The long story of evolution has been kept under subjection, secret within the conscience. As the foetus in the body of the mother repeats the evolution of millions of years, so the conscience in a brief interval recapitulates the inner evolution of eons. Conscience is the sword point of evolution.

"Thus, when men can believe that by their own strength the world can become just a bit better, there evolutionary history begins to be made. After evolution is thus inwardly accepted, it receives outer certification. The ancients knew nothing of objective natural history, but they knew the story of conscience emergent within the ego. The history of conscience has been recorded most solemnly by the Hebrew people, and this history is today transmitted to us in the Bible."[29]

Indeed if Conscience, the instrument of morality, did not make tremendous strides in development from the time that ritual purity was the highest goal until the great prophets demanded righteousness of the hear; from the time that honesty, love, mercy, and justice were only required

29. Kagawa, Toyohiko. Love the Law of Life. 302,303

toward the other members of the indivual's clan until these virtues must be extended universally to include the stranger and the enemy; and from the time that God was conceived of as a narrow, partisan, alternately cruel and sentimental deity until He became the divine Father of mankind perfectly good and loving--if conscience did not develop, how is it possible for us to account for these widely divergent levels?

In addition, the evolutionary theory of conscience moves clear away from the notion that conscience is a simple entity of somewhat magical origin and power. It was the older view that it was impossible for the evolutionists to account for the presence of conscience, a new increment, in man since it was apparently not to be discovered below the human level. "But with the analysis of conscience into elements (e.g. the so-called social instincts) which may be found in all consciousness, animal or otherwise, we may suppose that the process of evolution has only organized or consolidated elements otherwise separate, into a systematic tendency to act in the direction we call conscience. In this manner we may admit the uniqueness of the function, and so its distinction from the animal life while we at the same time accept the evolution of, if not the elements, certainly the organic whole for which the term stands. The distinction as a whole between man and animal is preserved, while the identity of their elements is maintained, evolution being formative not creative."[30]

30. Hyslop, James H. "Conscience." Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Vol. IV. 32, 33

Nevertheless, all is not said when these admissions are made, for after all, it is rather taken for ganted now that as moral standards have been changed and modified through the ages so conscience has grown and developed; but the quarrel with the evolutionary theory, as it is usually expressed, lies in the factors which it delineates as responsible for the development. Wilbur Marshall Urban in a chapter in the "Fundamentals of Ethics" has ably summed up the arguments of the opposition in this respect. He points out that on the basis of survival value the purely biological conceptions of natural selection and chance variation are insufficient to account for the development of conscience. Unquestionably they have played a part, and an important one, in the process in primitive life. There is little reason to doubt that there did exist a close connection between moral value and survival value. Yet, as human society has progressed, chance variation and natural selection seem to be of less and less importance, and no longer to be correlated with the development of conscience with any great facility. Moral development is on the higher levels, and much more influenced by conscious and rational selection and purpose than by any factor in the purely biological realm. Furthermore, we have no basis for believing that in the notion of the survival of the fittest, that "fittest" in the biological sense is to be calmly identified with the "Best" in the moral sense. Quite often the two are absolutely opposed. Another fallacy at the root

of this theory is that, by false analogy, it argues from plants and animals to men when differences so profound exist between the lower and higher levels of life that such arguments are made illusory. It assumes that perfection is the same thing for men and animals, and that by struggle for existence it is achieved. Both notions are utterly false.[31] Even granting these biological factors as basic, questions still demand answer--Why did conscience evolve in man? Can it have been a mere accidental process?

The theory, too, may be criticized because it had led on the one hand to a belief in "naturalism" in morals, an attempt to translate ethical situations, and problems of conscience into simple biological terms; and on the other hand, to a scepticism in morals. The latter is based upon the realization which the evolutionary theory brings of the undeniable evolution of morals, and dictates of conscience. In essence, the thesis of this scepticism is always this: "that the historical relativity in moral codes shows them to have no more validity than that of useful conventions for social control, or as rough and artificial compromises between individual and social interests; and secondly that the feeling of obligation of the indivudual towards these codes is either an illusion, or at the most without any authoritative or binding character."[32]

Strictly speaking,the theory cannot be condemned on the last two counts, yet it is to its descredit that it is responsible for their origin and is apparently intrinsically

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31. Urban, W.M. Fundamentals of Ethics. 98-114
32. Ibid, 383

unable to disprove them, or undermine their existence.

Plato's Reason as Conscience

Plato's identification of conscience with reason comes up for its share of criticism. MacDougall writes, "Shall we be content to say with Plato and some modern moralists that Divine Reason sits in the head controlling fierce passions that reside in the belly, as a charioteer controls with whip and rein a team of savage steeds? Hardly! Reasoning plays an important part ....in refining and harmonizing the moral sentiments. And reasoning may help us to acquire a moral creed, a belief that some one formula may express the ultimate goal of moral effort; such as 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number', or 'self-development', or 'the promotion of the good', or 'the realization of the good life', or 'the promotion of a higher culture,' or 'the realization of the perfect state.' And reasoning also helps us to determine what forms of conduct and what qualities of character are most conducive to the realization of the highest good, however we may have defined it. But 'Reason' is not a conative energy that may be thrown on this side or that, in our moral conflicts."[33]

We wish we could share the Platonic optimism and hold with the master philosopher in his earnest conviction that as far as man knows the good that is what he does; for if we utilized all the knowledge we have, the progress of hum-

33. MacDougall, W. Outline of Psychology, 409

anity would be steady and not the irregular backward forward movement that history shows it to be. Ignorance would be our only enemy in achieving moral values and education the solution of all our current ills. But conscience is more complex than this and even the most perfunctory examination of our own selves reveals that again and again we do that which we know is not the best. Emotion, impulse, or sentiment enters into a situation and completely overpowers the judgment of reason, and we do what we want to do, or what we feel like doing rather than following the guidance of careful thought.

Kant's Will as Conscience

Kant's conception of conscience is one of great depth and purity.He puts morality on the highest level. Nevertheless his theory lays itself open to objection at many points, for the level at which he places morality is almost too high, the atmosphere too rare and thin to support human life. From the practical point of view the system of morality which he derives from hisnotion of conscience is altogether too negative. It provides for the preservation of old values, but not for the creation of new ones.[34] If an action is only moral when it is following the commands of pure duty uncorrupted by desire then we can only be sure that we are acting in a moral fashion when we act against our desires. In other words, the man who despises doing

34. Urban, W.M. Fundamentals of Ethics. 68

the right thing is more moral than he who likes it. Yet, one cannot but object to denying the worth of an act just because it happens to be mixed with less elevated feelings than duty. His principles tell what not to do, but not what to do; but on the higher levels morality is distinctly positive rather than negative.

His emphasis upon form rather than content is fraught with dangers. Form is important and it is not easy to make specific injunctions for every situation; yet the content of an act can scarcely be totally ignored for that leads to a casuistry of the sort cited by Professor Bowman: The Jesuits argued that anything whatsoever can be rendered good if you could find a good motive for it. They set themselves finding good motives for all sins. Unless you loved evil for its own sake you could find magnificent arguments for the sins you wanted condoned. If you have a deadly enemy whose throat you would like to cut the Jesuits will find a way out. You know thatthe man hates you and is lying in wait to cut your throat. Unfortunately this action would send him to hell. To save his soul you find it your Christian duty to cut his throat first. You cannot be punished for this, for your motives were of the best.

The formalism of his universal law maxim may readily develop into what Urban describes as fanaticism. It "necessarily admits of no exceptions and will not permit of testing moral principles by their consequences. But life is

complex and changing, and consists of exceptional cases in the sense that it is made up of particular circumstances. It is a fundamental moral principle that murder is wrong, but who would say that the English officer, who in the Indian mutiny killed his wife to prevent her falling into the hands of the mutinous Sepoys, did wrong?[35] Or again, it leads to a sentimentalism utterly divorced from actuality that expresses itself in the conviction that man was made for morality rather than morality for man, and demands inhuman sacrifices.

From the theoretical point of view his conception may be criticized in three directions. The first has been expressed by Urban, "Kant's principle of universality actually assumes or presupposes the good or value of....institutions the norms of which our moral reason tells us we must not violate. No reasons for the good or value of these things, can, however, be given which are not of a teleological nature. No theory of morals can stop short of asking--why are these things good? Any theory of morality must ultimately become teleological....the range of variation in moral judgment, though considerable with regard to particular acts, is comparatively limited when it comes to types or classes of acts. Even here,however, important divergences occur. For one man the institution of private property is the sacred foundation of society, for another it is the source of all injustice. For one,man the institution of the permanent monogamous family is the condition of human

35. Urban, W.M. Fundamentals of Ethics. 67,68.

welfare; for another it is the fruitful cause of inhuman and unnatural restrictions. The real problem of morals is not the discovery of a formal test for rightness or wrongness of particular acts, but the determination of the value of the institutions or the forms of life with which our duties are connected and which they presuppose. We must conclude then, that morality is hypothetical in the large sense that the principle of universality presupposes teleology."[36]

The second theoretical defect that Kan't theory lacks an independent metaphysics has been pointed out by Hocking--"Kant has argued that the moral law depends on a metaphysical belief for its validity; but at the same time that the only ground for such metaphysical belief is this demand of the moral law. But metaphysics cannot sustain ethics if ethics is the only suppose of metaphysics."[37]

Finally, there is something unprogressive about his notion of morality. Conscience is forever struggling against desires, instincts, and emotions which are to be repressed rather than sublimated and made use of. He gives no place for investing them with new meaning and a new context. Moral perfection involves the complete elimination of inclination—duty is supreme. Such perfection he attributes to God, but if God is totally devoid of desire and emotion his experience must be infinitely poorer than that of man, which seems unlikely. It is true that emotion, impulse et cetera need the guidance of reason and the control of will, but this does not mean that they do not have a unique and necessary place in man. Kant, as Professor Bowman points out, appears to assume that all people are middle aged.

36. Urban, W.M. Fundamentals of Ethics, 69
37. Hocking, W.E. Types of Philosophy, 314

IV.

A Re-interpretation of the Term, Conscience

Whether ornot we admit the existence of such a thing as conscience, any attempt to discover the probability of its presence, its nature, and its function must be made in the light of the mistakes evidenced by the theories of the past. Perhaps, since the failure of a certain variety of psychology gave us a clue as to the reason for the present status of ideas concerning conscience, we may turn to its successors for suggestions for a more acceptable conception.

All of the present day schools of psychology which have any claims to a sound philosophical position are united to the extent of scorning the notion that the self is merely the sum of many parts. Instead it is conceived as a totality which manifests itself in many ways. These manifestations, for purposes of convenience and description, are often discussed as if they were separate entities; yet, it is now recognized that is is an unreal abstraction to think of any one of them functioning absolutely alone--as the sole factor in a situation. Reason is a function of the self, and may be the dominating influence in a special conclusion. Nevertheless,it may have, and undoubtedly was in one sense or another, set to work by that which we term impulse, toned and colored by emotion, and put into effect with the undeniable stamp of volition upon it. The self is thus forever more than the sum of its parts. It is a unique synthesis

which functions as a whole and ever seeks a closer and more perfect integration. The degree of success which it achieves in this search is determined to a large degree by the relationships with other selves which it established and the social milieu provides. The moment in the life experience of an individual when he begins to make conscious attempts to control and mold these relationships according to certain principles he conceives as good, he is organizing that self of his on a different level. The self becomes a new configuration, a new dynamic pattern. The self because it has entered into the moral realm has become a person, for the person is the self with a conscience. Conscience does exist. It exists not as part of the self, but as the self behaving in a moral fashion. It exists not as a thing but as a function. "It is the mind occupied with moral phenomena."[38]

No self who is not governed to some extent by the desire to do right has any claim to do the term person. Personality is won when the self makes use of the potentiality of conscience within him. Plato was not completely wrong when he emphasized the intuitive nature of our moral judgments. The consensus of philosophical opinion today seems to be that there is an a priori or intuitional element in conscience. Not that judgments are given to us in a complete and final form through some mechanical inspirational device, but that we, as potential persons, possess an indefatigable

38. Hyslop, J.H. "Conscience" Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. V. IV 32

conviction that it is right to do right. We have a firm faith in the necessity of being loyal to that which we believe to be the best. If we waver in doubt as to what is best, as we certainly do falter many times, then our only guide to conduct is what Josiah Royce called "Loyalty to Loyalty." At any moment this principle which is the innermost spirit of conscience is the best moral guide we have because so far as it is viewed as an authority outside of us, it is our ideal; it is our ideal, our cause set before us, it is the spirit of our own selves, the very ideal that makes us any rational moral person whatsoever.[39]

Conscience, thus, might again be defined as the judgment our ideals make upon us. Such ideals are to a great extent the product of, and concomitantly variable with the changes which take place in the level reached by the institutions of family, state, industry, church, and school which make up man's cultural environment. But this relationship does not tell the whole story. Ideals are determined by more subtle factors than mere custom. History is filled with instances of men whose activities, though characterized by that which we deem intense moral fervor, were in absolute opposition to mores of their time. They were impelled by a driving sense of the right that transcended the commonly acceptable. Their ideals had been molded by the culture systems of which they were a part, but they were subject to

39. Royce, Josiah. The Philosophy of Loyalty. 178-195

progressive critical modification in light of the conception of right which to the individual intelligence seemed inescapable. The famous case of Roger Baldwin during the World War is one of the best examples of this sort of thing. In spite of the pressure of public opinion, the chains of custom, the probable effect upon the war cause, and the white heat of deceiving sentimentalism at the time, he steadfastly refused to be influenced by any fear of punishment, and to participate in war service of any variety. The organized system of his ideals, his conscience, was utterly opposed to war and demanded that he be loyal to the best that he could envision whatever the consequences.

The life of every person is filled with moments when he must choose between the accepted thing and the thing he knows to be right. It really matters less in the final analysis of things whether or not the thing he knows to be right is right. The important consideration is the absolute determination to know the right and follow it. Continued effort in this direction may be fraught with error, but progress is certain. Ideals may change, must change, but the essential thing is to have them, for they furnish the purposive drive which brings men into rapport with the good which characterizes the universe we live in.

The man who does not seek the good will not find it. It is impossible to recognize anything unless we possess it in part. In a constant faithful search for the good we are

soon faced with an impression of such vitality that it cannot be ignored--in the words of Dr. H. A. Overstreet, " 'right and wrong' are grounded in the nature of things beyond our interference."[40] The good is appreciated subjectively, but it possesses an objectivity that any man who has ever sought it cannot deny. Conscience with its critical command for the good is a function of mind, but it transcends the individual mind, for it is a response to the pulling power of a reality which is of the nature of values rather than mere facts. The rapport which a conscience enables the person to secure with this meaningful reality is qualified by the degree of power which the conscience possesses--a power which must connote not only authority, but progressive wisdom. Such a conscience is a product of its times, but it surpasses them. It is a response to a reality that infinitely precedes these times; it is an activity which criticizes, rebuilds, and leaves these times as an outworn fabric of the past to go forward to a more real and more beautiful and better future. It is not only a product of past times, but a creator of new times.

Couched in religious phraseology we may say, "Conscience is formed by man's free choise in seeking God's will. It differs in time and place according to his information and perception of divinity in life. One conscience is not as right as another, although a less Godlike conscience is

40. Overstreet, H.A. The Enduring Quest. 165

not to be condemned when the lack of information is taken into account. Conscience grows according to the habits we form as we react to environment--rightly or wrongly. It is accurate only in so far as we have been intelligent and faithful in previous habit forming and living. It sometimes needs to be changed and when the intelligence clearly shows former error conscience may still prick us because of habits of conscience previously formed and yet the new opposing decision may be right....The great fallacy of modern psychology is to assume that because habit, emotion, et cetera, are being studied, there is no further reality. Conscience is more than its qualities and more than the process by which it develops."[41]

Or again in the words of Professor Urban, "That which impresses them (an increasing number of thoughtful men) about man's conscience is not so much its functional relation to changing levels of social development, as its increasing witness to values that transcent himself. From these facts they find it difficult to infer anything but a power, not ourselves, that makes increasingly for righteousness, and an objective moral order of which our conscience is becoming increasingly aware. In other words, conscience corresponds to something in the objective environment of man to which it is difficult to give any other term then the well-worn but meaningful name of God."[42]

If conscience is to function to any avail, the self,

41. Carter, Manfred. "Integration of Psychology and Faith" Journal of Religious Education: Sept. 1931. 555
42. Urban, W.M. Fundamentals of Ethics, 458

as Kant insisted, must be free. The recognition of "ought" implies "can". This "can" means more than mere lack of constraint if it means that at all. We cannot escape from the influences that are constantly brought bo bear upon us. Life would be somewhat of a vacuum if we could. Invidivual decision has little to do with whether 2 and 2 make 4. Freedom is more and greater than license--the power to do what one pleases when one pleases. Neither can it be indeterminism for this is too negative, empty, and disordered a conception, and there are no human activities that are not in some fashion determined. Freedom,rather, is a positive power and an ability to do. It is self determination for the self who is most free is the self who is organized and integrated to the extent that no chance event beyond a momentary hesitation disturbs the expression of the whole which steadfastly pursues its ends. The man is not most free who is most subject to caprice, nor is he free who is swayed by every breath of impulse. The free man is he who is no pawn of an idle emotion, but holds himself firmly in the course his total personality conceives as desirable and good. He has decided what he wants his self to do and be, and he is determining that all his impulses, emotions, sentiments, and desires shall be organized to progressively actualize the ideal. The degree of completeness which he achieves in this integration assays the amount of freedom which he possesses. Conscience and freedom are thus inseparable. To admit conscience is to acknowledge freedom, and to call a man free is to say that

his conscience is in control.

As there are various levels of freedom so there are various levels of conscience. The first level is characteristic of primitive societies and of childhood, but there are all too many people in our highly civilized nations today who have progressed no further. It is the stage at which the customs, taboos,and unwritten laws of the time are uncritically accepted and followed.

The second level might be termed the individualistic level, for the selves become aware that they are distinct and free. For the first time conduct becomes a matter of thought and all the old solutions for various problems are then subjected to trenchant analyses and criticism.

Somewhat following the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, the third and highest level that conscience may reach "is that on which the person has gained a critical insight into the rationals of social morality, and consciously identifies his own moral interests and standards of action with those of society, in so far as the latter are rational and coherent. At this level the individual becomes aware of the rational meaning and justification of social or institutional morals... and fulfills the demands of the established order in so far as these are not in contradiction with the social and personal values, in the affirmation of which the thinking self works out, with reference to his unique situation and inner nature, the universal principles of a rational

and free humanity. At this level the given, customary, and institutional system of moral values ceases to be ultimately authoritative and determinative. The ideals or values affirmed by rational self-conscious spirit are indeed social as well as individual, but the distinction has now arisen between the moral life as fact and as problem.

"The highest stage in moral evolution is the birth of a rational self-consciousness, in which the individual becomes fully aware, at once of his moral individuality, as this is defined by his actual capacities and social situation, and of the universal human and spiritual values that demand and must win expression through the medium of this very individuality of nature and uniqueness of situation.[43]

It is thishighest level that is of special and necessary significance for our modern day. For at least a decade we have been passing through a period wherein every phase of our personal and institutional life has been subjected to the most acrid criticism. We have at last reached the point when if anything is to endure we must move away from this negativism into genuinely constructive activity. We must leave antithesis for synthesis.

The thinkers of today are violently engaged in painting word pictures of their observations and reflections concerning the present day world and the life we live in it. The colors used are sombre; the activity portrayed

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43. Leighton, J.A. Man and the Cosmos, 417-420

feverishly chaotic; the scenes all resemble tangled mazes with no apparent escape from their gloomy depths. Change, materialism, mechanism, restlessness, hopelessness, unintelligent mass action,irreverence,intolerance, prejudice, scepticism are the words poured out on paper like paint thrown on canvas in huge ill-shapen, clashing splotches. Yet, strangely enough, for all its emphasis upon mechanisms and materialsims, never has a civilization been so interested in personality. But this interest has been a latecomer, not in its beginning,but in any claim to universality. For the time being we are in much the same condition regarding our mental and emotional life as was the primitive in respect to the physical environment.[44]

We know little of ourselves as persons, and for too long we have ignored the old Platonic search in order to devote our time to things of lesser value. The great problems of our time lie in the realm of personal relationships. The critical delineator in this realm is conscience, and when the individual consciences are permitted and encouraged to perform their rightful function the result cannot but be a truly moral society.

Morality is ever more than the adjustment of personal relations. It is a process of criticism without end, for "a person is never a finality; never, therefore,a fact which may be defined once and for all and then be counted upon to remain what it is."[45]

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44. Overstreet, H.A. The Enduring Quest. 214
45. Fite, Warner. Moral Philosophy. 142

It is undeniable that certain insects are much better adjusted to their environment than men. Adjustment is an insufficient term to describe the moral process, for then the well adjusted man would have to be our goal, and the human vegetable our criterion of him who has achieved. There are different levels to which one mayadjust one's self and we must come to realize that from the point of view of worth, it is better to be malajusted to a high level than perfectly adjusted to a lower level. In other words, to employ the classic example, it is better to be a Socrates unsatisfied than a pig satisfied.[46] Most individuals need something to jar them out of their self complacencies, and make them start on the road toward actualizing their potentialities. Conscience, as W. E. Hocking writes in "Human Nature and Its Remaking," is the principal inner agency for this task; hence it must stand as a critic over against everything that is to be remade, and so over against all instincts. It plays the part of censor for the most part permissive, and hence silent: but de jure it is cognizant of every act of will, and of the total policy of the self. Conscience stands outside the instinctive life of man, not as something separate, but as an awareness of the success or failure of that life in maintaining its status and its growth... It is not an instinct. It is the latest and finest in-

46. Horton, W.M. A Psychological Approach to Theology. 42

strument for self-integration of instinct."[47]

It is at this point in the analysis of conscience that the problem of sin may rightfully come up for consideration. The term sin is even more unfashionable than conscience, but it is a phenomenon which can scarcely be ignored in spite of its unpopularity as a topic of discussion. In a matter of fact way it may be described as "the refusal to interpret crude impulse in terms of the individual's most intelligent will to power...it is the deliberate failure to interpret an impulse so that it will confirm or increase the integration of selfhood."[48] It is the particular variety of human malady which as a defect in man's purposes, ideals, sentiments, or attitudes tends to throw him out of accord with the Cosmic Reality on which his well-being depends.[49] At any moment the awareness of this failure or defect, however vague the consciousness may be, is conscience.

The task at hand for all who are interested in the creation of genuine persons is the education and perfection of this instrument for personality development. If external sanctions of conduct have been labelled, Not to be trusted!, then the accuracy of the internal sanction must be made trustworthy. All too often it is the nega-

47. Hocking, W.E. Human Nature and Its Remaking. 122, 123
48. Ibid.
49. Horton, W.M. A Psychological Approach to Theology.

tive aspect of this sanction which has been given emphasis Historically, this has been especially the case when the problem of sin was dealt with. The "Thou shalt nots" took preeminence over every other criterion of activity. But conscience is primarily an instrument for building rather than tearing down. Its eternal principle that it is right to do right is a principle designed for construction. It demands more than recognition of sin and moral disease. For this reason in the process of education and perfection, it must move from the realm of science into the realm of religion. Psychology, for instance, is incapable of bringing about the fullest and most harmonious realization of the ideal possibilities of a person, for in a very true sense, the work it does is negative since it looks at man analytically. The psychologist, to employ Horton's quotation from "Foursquare" by Oliver, "has to exercise the devils of fear, of inhibition, of obsession; the lesser demons of worry, and tenseness, and self pity. Then having got the devils out of the house of the mind, he must do something at least to clean house....but here his work stops. He has nothing to say as to what kind of people are to be, by the owner, invited to enter, and dwell there...."[50] If the work is not continued, it is apt to be another example of the old story of the newly swept and garnished

50. Horton, W.M. A Psychological Approach to Theology.

house where new devils came to dwell because it was an empty habitation. It must not remain empty--it must be furnished with new habits of thought, and new ambitions, and this is a task for the specialist in human souls, not the specialist in nervous diseases. If the psychologist goes on, he is out of his own field and is performing the work of a minister, and of religion itself--the work of kindling and organizing new loyalties, reverences, purposes, and enthusiasms, the positive work of promoting mental and moral health. Too often, the psychologist believes he accomplishes his cure by the psychological technique alone, but he must realize that the final creation of rehabilitation of a person is only achieved by his adjustment to that which is deepest in the universe, and when this is done, it is a religious procedure.

The persistence of negativism in connection with the conception of the function of conscience has led to many false conclusions. One of the most common in the popular writing of the day is, "The creative life is not the good life." This is definitely caused by thinking of conscience as an instrument of restraint, and in a time when the maxim of self-expression is eternally preached no check is regarded with any favor. Such a point of view is both confusing and insufficient. Its insufficiency lies in the belief that self expression is the goal for which man should strive. But self expression comes in

many forms and civilization has progressed through the curbing and regulation of many of them. Expression cannot be permitted to run riot; it must be directed into worthwhile channels. We had better be sure that the self is of such a character that it deserves expression before we adopt any such doctrine in an unqualified manner. Self realization comes much nearer being a satisfactory conception. The self is realized when it becomes a person, and it becomes a person when in some degree it enters into the good life.

The confusion that lies in the above point of view--that the creative life is not the good life--is a misconception of the good life. It is pictured, as we have glimpsed in the introduction to our general problm, as a life bound by convention, fettered by custom, negative, mediocre, sanctimonious, narrow,meagre, and goody-goody. But the good life is not an ordinary life, but very rare, for the Good forever transcends. It is most completely experienced on the third and highest level we have described of conscience. Conscience functions in order to make this life possible--a life, in the words of its greatest exponent, "abundant"--a life, rich, vital, and of positive character through which man may achieve his ultimate destiny, the development of himself as a person and intimate knowledge of God. The good life is not only a creative life but the greatest of creative lives for out of its processes comes the person.

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